

Congressional Notes



Slamming of Telephone Service

Been Slammed?

Actions your constituents should take if their preferred telephone company was changed without their knowledge or consent:

First

Ask their local telephone company to reconnect their telephone service to their preferred telephone company and remove any charges from their bill for switching companies.

Second

Call the company that slammed their service. Tell the company they will only pay the charges their original preferred long distance company would have charged.

Third

Call the telephone company from which they were switched. Report the unauthorized change. Ask the company to reestablish their account.

Fourth

Call 1-700-555-4141 to verify that their residential service is connected to their long distance company of choice.

Fifth

Send a written complaint to the FCC if they are unable to resolve their complaint with the company that switched their service. The complaint should include the names and addresses of their preferred local and long distance companies, and the company that slammed their service.

Want to Prevent Being Slammed?

Your constituents can protect themselves by taking the following steps:

- ☛ Review phone bills each month. Call the companies listed on the bills and ask about services and charges they did not authorize.
- ☛ Request their local telephone company to obtain their direct permission before changing their telephone company.
- ☛ Specify which type of service should be changed when selecting a new telephone company -- especially if they can select different companies for local, in-state long distance, and out-of-state long distance telephone service.
- ☛ Carefully read promotional material, the forms used to change telephone service, and letters and postcards verifying a change in long distance service. Take immediate action to correct unauthorized changes in telephone service.
- ☛ Ask about all costs and restrictions associated with discount plans, bargain rates offered for short time periods, long-term service contracts, and package deals combining several different types of services.
- ☛ Just say no to telemarketers if they are not interested in the company's services.